

Bristol 2 Feb. 1855.

Dear Friend May.

Miss Estlin will answer for my being late so long. It almost seems as though apology might be due - for one might suppose there was danger of becoming burdensome. But this has been to me the "selectable when times" - and besides a convenient centre while calling out for little visits to Bath & Bridgewater.

Your letter gave me, at your letters are ever sure to do, much satisfaction - You seem to be well satisfied with my course, in the Main, as respects the London Conference, even with the imperfect knowledge you have, or had of it. By this time, doubtless, you know more about it - & if so, it seems to me you will see that I was placed in most trying circumstances, and could not possibly have acted differently, without compromising the integrity, & sacrificing the honor & digni-

ty of the Anti-Slavery Movement in the United States.

The Conference was proposed in order as was pretended to effect a Union of Anti-Slavery Elements. Our true friends were invited professedly for that object. But a glance at its programme, at once convinced me, that what they could not effect in broad street through the lies & slanders of Scoble, they meant now to achieve through the specious & smooth-faced diplomacy of Chamberlain - But the utter ruin of our reputation in this country and the alienation of our few remaining friends & coadjutors, was the object sought beyond all controversy -

On the first day of the Conference Thayer & Foster both told George Thompson what we had to expect. Thompson told me - I repeated it in his own words, to Westing. May & Bishop in his presence - a number of times I repeated it. I repeated the same in the Conference, as you will see by my speech.

only suppressing names. I went and told Mr. Thompson before hand, that I should do so; and told him he might go & let Sturge know that I was intending to do so. And in this post, my speech is correctly given in the Advocate.

Now, Mr. Thompson denies that Sturge said any such thing. He begins thus: "Looking back upon the conversation, & to the connexion in which the words of Mr. Sturge occurred, I believe them to have meant simply, that nothing I could say would be likely to change his opinion, that the Resolution should retain its original form."

Two things strike me here. One is, he was with Sturge a great deal at Manchester & elsewhere, when this letter to his constituency was penned [You have this letter & all the rest of the affair, in the Feb. Advocate.] And being with Sturge why didn't he ask ^{what he meant,} him, & get from his own lips, a denial, instead of hypothesizing one himself? The other thing I have to say is, that this is all a very

clarity & brevity from beginning
to end - Sturge & Forster did say what
Thompson at first told us; and ^{the former} was
as we were also told, "honest & outspoken
even in the declaration".

Ms. Thompson also denies in
Capital letters that he used any argu-
ment to induce us to act with him
in the dishonorable treatment of the
Anti Slav. Society in America - And
how dishonorable! When none of
the friends of that Society were ad-
mitted to the secret counsels or
sittings of those with whom we
were to cast in our lot, & entrust
the safety & integrity of the Anti Slavery
cause! I demanded of Thompson
why we could not even be in the
same Committee room with
Thayer & Foster - I told him, you
saw them both flee, the moment
their secretary announced me, as if
I had brought typhoid & plague. And
all the answer Thompson gave
us was, "You can get all you want
of that Society, provided you do
not ask for it -!!" What kind of
conditions were these, to accept of those

who for fifteen years had only calumniated & insulted us, or ~~been~~ ignored our very existence?

But Mr. Thompson says in italics, lending with emphasis, that he used no argument, gave no counsel that we should act as he did. That could his own example be, but "argument" irresistible almost to me, who had learned to love & trust him, as the elder brother of Mr. Garrison himself? And then what did he mean, when he told us they were willing to strike out all allusion to the Congress men and even the A. & F. Society itself - And then at the last moment, what was his object in assuring us that "he had reason to know, that a letter had been forwarded already to Lewis Tappan, informing him that they had done with him & his Society!!"

What did Mr. Thompson mean, when he told us he was going with Broad Street, & then spread out all these considerations, if he did not mean to influence us?

And then about that "Mythical
Speech" as he calls it. The Liberator
& Standard copy from the Empire
that he paid a glowing tribute of re-
spect to the American Anti Slavery
Society. Mr. Bishop gave them no
such account. Five or six of us
were waiting to hear such a tribute -
trying to hear it - But we heard
it not. No body ever heard of it,
until six weeks after it is said to
have been delivered =

And what is Mr.
Thompson's own account of it? In
the first period & in the last one, if
you turn to the speech in the Ad-
vocate, you will see that it
proceeds on the supposition that
Mr. Bishop's Amendment is under
discussion - He says, "Previous
to the Amendment before the conference
being withdrawn, permit me to"
say a few words in reference to it."
And then in the last sentence he
says, "I shall consent to the withdrawal
of the Amendment!"

Now turn to page 239 of the
Advocate, and in his letter to his

Constituents he says distinctly, "Be
fore I rose to speak Mr. Bishop had
proposed & cheerfully withdrawn his
amendment" - Mr. May had also
consented to withdraw his sec-
onding of it - And then he adds
"all this time, I confess I sat si-
lent, as did many others -"

Now it is a curious enquiry
with some, where in the Proceed-
ings of the Conference, the "Mythi-
cal Speech is to be placed. I
say this to my own ear & heart

When Mr. Thompson writes a letter
to his constituents, & Mr. Follen con-
cocts a speech to appear in the
same paper, they had better be
a little more cautious in compar-
ing notes, so as not too glaringly to
betray the plot, by so sadly crossing ~~each other~~
each other.

One thing more - You say in your
letter that I overlooked the account of
My resolution in the Empire, & My twenty
minutes speech in support of it. You
must not suppose I read the Em-
pire, or watched the proceedings
of the two days at London Tavern

inattentively, or with any but feelings the
most intense - Let me say then, that
I have had access to a dozen copies
or more of the Empire, of the 2nd Dec
as also that of the 9th. We were assum^d
red the Broad street com. bought six
hundred copies for distribution - But
neither they nor the Reporter either
had any allusion to my Resolution
or a line or letter of the speech made
in support of it. What charges in
the Empire, a voyage across the Atlan^{tic}
may have wrought, it is not for
me to determine. Let me just
add for the ^{liberation} Standard's sake, that so
long as there is every probability that the
paper is de facto, the property of Joseph
Sturge, we need not be particularly jealous
for its prosperity. I only am responsible for this sus
picion, but have some reason for entertaining it.

The whole scene has been
one to me, of fearful trial - I have acted
with our real friends, (as I think they will
witness,) with all the energy I possessed
& with what of wisdom, I & they have, con
joined - The most trying things of all
can hardly be described - But I hope
& trust we have saved our holy enterprise
from one of the most subtle & danger
ous encounters in a small way, that ev
er beset its path - It made me ill, but
I am now restored & subscribe in haste
Ever truly - Parker Pillsbury